

began appearing in the press concerning domestic intelligence activities and surveillance of political activities of U.S. citizens.

These revelations and others revealed by the Watergate scandal convinced lawmakers that Congress had been too permissive and trusting, failing to carry out its oversight responsibilities over the executive branch.

In response, a U.S. Senate committee was formed to investigate intelligence activities by the government. The United States Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities, commonly referred to as the Church committee, after its Senate chairman, issued more than 50,000 pages of reports in what is considered the most comprehensive review of intelligence activities in the country.

Ironically, the reports included sections on mail opening as well as the National Security Agency and fourth amendment rights. In rebuffing recent congressional requests for information on the current NSA program, the administration has made the argument that the NSA surveillance program is too sensitive to be shared with Congress, even to Members in the classified setting.

When these same concerns were weighed by the Church committee in 1975, the opposite result was reached, with the committee refusing to neglect its oversight responsibility merely because their work would be harder. In fact, the extensive oversight and the substantial record generated by the Church committee inspired the creation of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

Both have worked effectively to ensure that the President has the tools necessary to thwart attacks while ensuring respect for the civil liberties of Americans and the adherence to the rule of law. FISA, as it is called, has provided a measure of oversight over foreign intelligence activities on U.S. soil, and with it the confidence of the American people.

This administration, however, has undermined that trust by circumventing FISA. Congress should follow the example of the Church committee, by vigorously examining the NSA surveillance program and determining what legislative action is necessary. The administration should cooperate and work with Congress as we engage in our oversight responsibilities, and make the case for statutory change if revisions are required to meet new challenges in the war on terror.

If, however, the administration rejects congressional oversight in this area and continues to defy requests for information, Congress should seek other means of redress. I have introduced bipartisan legislation with Representative JEFF FLAKE that can serve as a basis for examining these issues and restoring the rule of law.

The NSA Oversight Act, H.R. 11, would reiterate existing law requiring

court approval for the surveillance of Americans on American soil, and would provide greater oversight of NSA's surveillance activity. Our legislation also makes some key changes to FISA in order to streamline and expedite the process in response to the administration's argument that the current framework was too cumbersome.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Congress to fully examine this issue, step up its oversight responsibility, and take legislative action if necessary.

RECOGNIZING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE D.C. PRESERVATION LEAGUE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Mr. TURNER of Ohio and I are the co-chairs of the Congressional Historic Preservation Caucus. I am proud to rise today, as cochair of that caucus, to recognize the 35th anniversary of the District of Columbia Preservation League.

In 1971 the old post office on Pennsylvania Avenue was slated for demolition to allow completion of an addition to the Federal Triangle Building. In part, to save that Washington landmark, the DCPL, which is also known as Don't Tear it Down, was founded. And since then, the DCPL has worked tirelessly to preserve Washington's historic treasures and save many of the unique features of this great city, the features that really define our Nation's capital.

Washington's history and character are among Washington's greatest assets, and are vital to the local economic development efforts.

Advocacy and education have been at the forefront of the DCPL's mission. The League has produced educational programs, including tours, lectures, newsletters and guides of historic districts here in Washington, and since 1996 has annually published a list of Washington's most endangered places.

For the last 35 years, the DCPL has prepared, sponsored, or cosponsored more than 120 individual District of Columbia landmark nominations and many historic district nominations throughout the Nation's Capital.

Mr. Speaker, this is just a sampling of the efforts that the DCPL puts into protecting the history of the District of Columbia. I am sure the League will continue to make invaluable contributions to this city, and every member of the League, every member, every citizen of the District of Columbia, has every right to feel proud of the history of the work, the legacy of the DCPL.

I urge all of the citizens of Washington and supporters of historic preservation around the country to join me in commending the DCPL for its dedication and commitment to preserving and protecting the history and environment of this city through the work of advocacy and education.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to submit for the RECORD a resolution, a proclamation by the Congressional Historic Preservation Caucus, recognizing Thursday, January 25, 2007 as the DCPL's 35th anniversary.

Whereas, the DC Preservation League was founded by dedicated volunteers in 1971 as Don't Tear It Down, to save the Old Post Office on Pennsylvania Avenue and other notable downtown buildings from Federal Government-sponsored demolition,

Whereas, Don't Tear It Down worked to provide protection for historic landmarks and historic districts in the Nation's Capital through the establishment of the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act (D.C. Law 2-144) in 1978,

Whereas, over the last 35 years the DC Preservation League has prepared, sponsored or co-sponsored more than 120 individual DC Landmark nominations and numerous historic district nominations throughout the Nation's Capital,

Whereas, to carry out its mission of preservation advocacy and education, the DC Preservation League has produced educational programs including tours, lectures, citywide conferences, candidates' forums, publications including newsletters, information brochures and guides to historic districts, and since 1996 has annually publicized a list of Washington's Most Endangered Places,

Whereas, the DC Preservation League works with the government of the United States, its federal agency representatives, committees appointed by the President, and organizations chartered by Congress to advocate for the preservation of historic resources as a vital component of the economic and cultural life of our Nation's Capital,

Whereas, the DC Preservation League is supported by members, contributors and volunteers from across the Washington, DC region who are dedicated to the promotion of the history of the Nation's Capital for visitors and residents alike,

Whereas, the DC Preservation League will celebrate 35 years of preservation activism as Washington, DC's only citywide non-profit historic preservation organization at the historic Willard InterContinental Hotel on Thursday, January 25, 2007,

As co-chairs of the Congressional Historic Preservation Caucus, we would like to recognize January 25, 2007 as the DC Preservation League's 35th Anniversary.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is an honor to come before the House once again. We have finished our work for the week, and a lot has happened, a lot has been said. As you know, the 30-Something Working Group, Mr. MURPHY, and I are here today, my good friend from Connecticut. We are going to talk about some of the issues that have been discussed over the last 24 hours on the floor, some of the votes that we have taken, even as it relates to last week, some of the challenges that are facing the country.

I know there will be other Members of the 30-Something Working Group

that may be joining us this afternoon. I can tell you as we continue to move forward in this 110th Congress, there is a lot that the American people have to be proud of at some level of accomplishment as it relates to issues that are truly facing the American people.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we had an opportunity to hear from the President of the United States. Some say that there was some issues that he brought to the table that are not new. He has mentioned some of these issues before. Alternative fuel, the issue of Iraq, talking about health care, still holding onto the issue of savings accounts that have been proposed in past State of the Unions but haven't been acted upon to even bring about real changes as relates to health care.

The President talked about earmarks last night, Mr. Speaker. But it is interesting under the Republican-controlled Congress, that is when the earmarks were out of control. And it was under his watch and his party's watch. And now the President wants to be the chief, I guess, the chief person who says who gets an earmark and who does not get an earmark. Earmark reform was a part of the Democratic reform package, and was not even really given serious consideration until the Democrats took control of the Congress.

The glaring issue as it relates to Iraq, and Mr. MURPHY and I and Mr. RYAN were talking about this just yesterday, it is obvious that the American people voted for change in the last election, and that the President continues to march in the opposite direction of the American people. The American people are ready to go in a new direction. The President seems like he is ready to go and continue to keep going in the old direction.

The new direction, redeployment of troops, working in a diplomatic way, following some of the Iraq Study Group recommendations of talking with Iran and Syria, and I would even add Turkey if we want to look at a diplomatic resolution to what is happening in the Middle East, making sure that our troops are safe, making sure that we take the training wheels off the Iraqi Government train, redeploy, diplomatic mission.

The President seems to think that the answer is to have an escalation in troops. The American people are looking for escalation in the truth, not the troops. And also the President has spoken of giving him a chance for his plan to work. Well, I can tell you that the American people have given the President a lot of latitude as it relates to Iraq. I think it is important, I take from Senator WARNER's, and I can talk, I have a number of quotes here on the escalation of troops from Senator WARNER, the former chairman, who is a Republican, the former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

I can also take from our colleagues who spoke after the President spoke yesterday and prior to his speech yesterday, that contradict or are going in

a new direction as it relates to Iraq and what the American people called for, versus what they did not call for, more of the same.

□ 1600

So hopefully, Mr. MURPHY, we will talk a little bit about some of this today.

There are some other issues, as it relates to the State of the Union speech, that we can get into, but I think it is important, we spent a lot of time yesterday talking about bipartisanship, we spent a lot of time yesterday saying the President had an opportunity, and we hoped that he would come and share with us, hold up issues such as the minimum wage that we passed overwhelmingly on this floor that he is ready to sign. We thought that he would come to the floor saying, I want to work with the leaders here in the House on the minority and majority side on passing real health care on behalf of millions of Americans that are without health care. Those things did not come out.

I can say that the Americans, Mr. Speaker, that were pointed out yesterday in the gallery by the President, well-noted heroes and "she-roes" that were sitting up there, this State of the Union was about a state of the Union, and I can tell you, hearing last night's speech, we have a lot of work ahead of us, Democrats and Republicans. So I am excited about that opportunity.

I yield to my good friend, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I thank you, Mr. MEEK.

It is an honor to be standing in the traditional place of Mr. RYAN today, and I will attempt to equal at least half of his eloquence on this floor.

You are right, I think there are a lot of missing pieces from that speech last night. It was my first opportunity to sit and listen to a Presidential State of the Union, and you couldn't help but leave disappointed. There were a lot of promises that I think the American people were looking to be fulfilled in that speech.

Mr. MEEK, I think you were exactly right when you talked about a sense of bipartisanship, which I think is infectious in this building right now due to the first 100-hours agenda that, as we know, drew bipartisan support, on average 60 Members of the other aisle supporting each piece of that 100-hours agenda. That bipartisanship seems to be lost when it comes to the issue of Iraq.

It doesn't go without note that since the President had unveiled his plan to escalate this war, to put another 21,000 brave men and women in harm's way to do a job that Colin Powell and others will tell you 100,000 people can't do.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. MURPHY, will you yield for a moment?

I was kind of paying attention to the room last night when the President said, "Give my plan a chance to work." Now, if you kind of look on the gauge

of who stands up for that or who claps for it, I can tell you that it was lukewarm on the Republican side, and definitely over here on the Democratic side it was more of the same.

I mean, you made it to Congress, I made it back to Congress with a message that we were going to move in a new direction. And I believe that we will have a majority, and I am not just talking about a Democratic majority, if it comes down to a question, I know they had some action on the other side of the Capitol dome today, on this very issue of the escalation of the troops, and we have quotes here that will be on the 30-Something Web site I know, hopefully, by the end of the week of Senators, Representatives and others that have said just the contrary to what the President said last night. So I believe that there is some hope on the Iraq issue.

Now, the Republican leadership is not necessarily there where we need them to be. And you heard me say once before that I am not upset with certain Members that are not following the will and the desire of the American people. The good thing about the U.S. House of Representatives is we are all up for reelection in 23, 24 months from now, and we have to be accountable. And if Members want to follow leadership, or whoever they think that is going to share with them how they should vote and what they should stand for on all these different issues, then I think it is important that they realize that we are going to have an election, and that you have got to go home, you have to explain why you voted for more of the same.

I believe that we are getting to a head here. And the good thing about being in the majority is that we have the opportunity, we used to give speeches on this floor, Mr. MURPHY, saying if we are blessed enough to have the opportunity to be in the majority to lead the American agenda, the American people, everyday Americans who wants accountability and who pray and look for bipartisanship, look for leadership, we will give it to them, and that is what we are going to have a chance to do.

Thank you for yielding. I just wanted to point that out because that was an observation. And while I am speaking, if you want, I will yield to you so that we can drive this home, because we want to break this down because we don't want Members to go back to their districts and say, you know, I didn't understand that. We want individuals to be able to pull the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and say, wow, how couldn't you understand it; it was mentioned 10 or 12 times in a given day on the reason why we were doing what we did.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. MEEK, you are very right. And I am glad those quotes are going to be on the 30-Something Web site because it really is a cross-section of this Chamber, the people who have been really

speaking out and asking the President to revisit this plan to escalate the war. You have dozens of Republicans, more every day, that are coming out and suggesting that there has got to be a plan C, right? Plan A we know didn't work; we are now debating plan B, which everyone from foreign policy experts to the President's own military advisors suggest won't work.

And we hope that some of the folks watching us on C-SPAN right now caught some of the hearings, Mr. MEEK, before the Armed Services Committees and other relevant committees because you have heard some remarkable testimony from the President's own military leaders expressing grave doubts about this plan to put new troops into Iraq and into Baghdad.

So we have got both sides of the aisle coming together and saying, listen, let's sit down and talk about plan C, because that is what this is about. This is not about just standing up here in front of TV cameras and telling people the President's plan doesn't work; it has got to be about setting another way. And there are other ways. We can talk about the redeployment of troops. We can talk about starting to rebuild our credibility in the world.

The President talked last night, Mr. MEEK, about the unification of the world's communities around the President's strategy. Well, that certainty doesn't comport with reality, it doesn't comport with what we are seeing; but it doesn't mean that the opportunity is lost, it doesn't mean that we still can't go back to the world community and say, let's together build a new strategy to get ourselves out of Iraq in a way that leaves that country as stable as we can.

And, Mr. MEEK, I don't know about you, but I think we can still do that. And I am actually interested. The President is going to speak to our issues conference in a week and a half, and I know there is some grumbling about that, but I am actually looking forward to him coming to us so that we might be able to have another chance to persuade him to work with both sides of the aisle here on this floor to come up with a new strategy that will allow us to lend stability to that country and rebuild the world community, and do it in a way that doesn't put more and more troops of ours in harm's way. And I know, Mr. MEEK, of other Members who have been here much longer than I believe that we can do that together.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. We can do it together. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that it can be done.

Let's just put it this way: It is the new direction versus more of the same. There are Members of Congress that are saying that they are on board on the new direction. There are troops in Iraq that are saying that they are on board for a new direction. And I can tell you from 4 years on the Armed Services Committee that looking in the eyes of the commanders when they

come, they are also looking for a new direction. And even, Mr. Speaker, when the President puts forth this Iraq Study Group that brought forth recommendations on the direction we should move in, the President says, thank you very much for your input, I appointed you, bipartisan commission, but we are going to send new troops to Iraq, and that is the answer.

I am not a Member of Congress with a conspiracy theory, but I will say that the President sent the 20,000 additional troops before we had an opportunity to really look at what is happening or what has been happening in the time that our committee rooms have sat with the lights off. We didn't have hearings in the 109th Congress. NANCY PELOSI wasn't Speaker of the House. The will and the desire wasn't there to find out what is happening with all the supplemental money that we have given towards Iraq and Afghanistan and other issues that we paid for that didn't go through the regular budget process.

Now we are going to have an opportunity, hopefully, in speaking with Mr. MURTHA, who is the chairman of the Defense Subcommittee on Defense. He is asking questions. They are having hearings. Brass and suits together are coming in to answer the tough questions about, well, what happened to the money we have already given you?

When you look at companies like—we talked about Halliburton, and we talked about some of these other companies that have run away with these dollars, we talked about the U.S. troops that are being there, let's talk about the mercenaries that are there. Let's talk about the hired individuals that are there to carry out missions that are not wearing a U.S. flag on their shoulders, but they are contractors to carry out security missions for convoys. There are a number of those individuals that are dying, and they are not being counted in the troop calculation. And many of those individuals, Mr. Speaker, are former members of our military Armed Forces. I know for a fact that some of these companies are providing even better incentives, much greater, sometimes twice that our men and women are earning in uniform. So after their time is up, as we give the military their ability, because so many individuals have been deployed two and three times, and when their time is up as it relates to their service, to get them to reenlist we incentivize them not only through monetary means, but also the ability to move up the ladder.

At the same time you have the private sector that understands that same philosophy, Mr. Speaker and Members, and they are incentivizing them to go into the private side of it. And these individuals are securing the convoys, securing some of the facilities that are there, carrying out some missions. And they are replacing, because we talk about the coalition, if you want to break that down, I mean, we have U.S.

men and women in uniform, and then U.S. contractors. It is not Great Britain, it is not some of the other folks that people are talking about, the coalition of the few, the United States of America and U.S. contractors. Guess what? U.S. taxpayers are paying for that. So I think it is important, the issues that we talked about.

I have Senator WARNER here, I mentioned him earlier, the Republican from Virginia. Basically he is saying after the speech last night, to place our U.S. men in the middle of a fight between Sunnis and Shiites is not the right time to do that.

You also have CHUCK HAGEL. Senator HAGEL has also said, Republican, has said that he thinks the speech that was given last night by the President represents the most dangerous foreign policy blunder in this country since Vietnam. If it is carried out, he would have to resist it. He said, "I will resist it." This is not what Democrats are saying. People have heard what we had to say. Now we have Republicans that have heard the voice of the American people that are saying, if I am going to stay in the U.S. Congress, I am not appointed, I am elected, if I am going to stay in the U.S. Congress, I have to follow the will and the desire of my constituents and the American people.

I always say, Mr. MURPHY, when we are elected from our districts, we are federalized to represent an entire country and those that are in harm's way. We are talking about training. We are talking about tactical missions against terrorists or what have you, not everyday street patrol, security patrol on the block. That is where our men and women are losing.

We have been talking about training of the troops from the time that we were in Baghdad, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you, I am a witness to it, I have been on the committee, we have had the testimony. Oh, we are training them; and then all of a sudden we find out that the training is not keeping up with the need. Well, we have military bases not only in Mosul, but Tikrit, also in Baghdad and other spots throughout Iraq where those troops can be trained right there.

I look forward, Mr. Speaker, in going to Iraq within the next couple of months, Mr. MURPHY, I would love to have you join me if you haven't gone already, to ask these tough questions on the issue of the training issues because now it is under our watch. The American people have empowered a majority of the Members who feel the way the American people feel, that we need to take care of our mission in Iraq. I am pretty sure we will have some presence of troops there for some time, but not at these levels, not at the level to where that is not an issue of redeployment.

Mr. MURPHY, I hate to get preachy on this, but the President has said that is up to another President to deal with, another administration to deal with, I am not going to do it. Well, like our

good friend Senator WEBB said last night, if he doesn't want to take the leadership way, then we are going to have to show him the way, the Congress.

□ 1615

And the good thing about it, Mr. Speaker, it will be in a bipartisan way. It won't be just Democrats. It will be Democrats and Republicans, and I welcome that bipartisan spirit.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, Mr. MEEK is very right. It is going to be in a bipartisan way. And there are moments when maybe public opinion and things you hear back in the district don't always match up with maybe the things that you hear from the experts on that particular issue. That is inevitable in public service. And there are choices to be made, and inevitably your obligation in the end is to side with the people that you represent.

But on this issue there is a growing hegemony of opinion that backs up public opinion within the military community. Mr. MEEK quoted some of the leaders of both parties who have come out against this plan for escalation, but the military has come out against this plan as well.

Let me just give a quick quote of Colonel Paul Hughes, who was the first person that was put in charge of strategic planning of the U.S. occupation in Baghdad, the first person on the ground to start planning on how we were going to keep Baghdad stable. We obviously failed pretty miserably in that mission, but here is what he said about the President's plan to escalate this war. He said: "Just sending more troops to Baghdad is like pouring more water in the sands of Al Anbar. It's going to disappear without accomplishing anything."

And that is what we have heard over and over again. There may be a number of troops that you could put into Baghdad or, lest we forget, the 12 other, 11 other major areas of conflict in Iraq. There might be a number, but it certainly isn't 21,000. And the President in his speech talked about not only using those troops to secure Baghdad but also using them to secure Al Anbar Province, also trying to do increased training, also trying to better secure the borders around Iraq to prevent the insurgents from coming in. Twenty-one thousand troops can't do that, and what ends up happening, as many of our military experts have told us over and over again, is it just puts those men and women in even graver danger. That is an opinion shared not just by Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle but by the military community as well.

And Mr. MEEK talked about the oversight that is going to happen here in terms of our strategy going forward. And I think that these hearings have been so valuable because I think they educate the American public and educate all of us about our options going

forward. But the oversight also has to be about how we conduct ourselves so far, because if there was any faith in our ability to manage this war and manage the reconstruction, then maybe we would look a little bit differently upon the President's proposal.

But the fact is, and this number startled me, we have \$8.8 billion of money, Mr. MEEK, of money that is unaccounted for by the Coalition Provisional Authority, \$8.8 billion that we can't even explain where it went. That is about enough money to run the State of Connecticut for an entire year. And that is not the money we spent; that is the money we can't find anymore.

Mr. MEEK served on the Armed Services Committee. I am going to get the opportunity to serve on the Government Reform Committee under Mr. WAXMAN of California, and our focus there is going to be on that waste, fraud, and abuse that has happened within our military spending in Iraq. And it is important not just because of taxpayer dollars and because we were all sent here to make sure that every hard-earned dollar that our taxpayers send to Washington gets spent effectively, but it is important because it educates us on the inefficiency and the blundering in a lot of places that has happened in the conduct of this war and the conduct of the reconstruction. And there are a myriad of reasons why we should start listening to people like Mr. MURTHA and others who are counseling us to redeploy our forces and to significantly draw down the number of troops we have there very soon. There are a number of reasons why we should take those arguments seriously and why many of us support bringing a large number of our troops home very soon.

But at the top of that list is the fact that the money we are spending there, even beyond the philosophy, just when you are talking about the money, the money isn't being spent to make that country safer, to rebuild that country. That money is being lost, and as you said, Mr. MEEK, through the Speaker, much of that money we are now finding out actually finds its way into the hands of the very people that we are fighting in Iraq. We can't account for it, and thus it finds its way into the hands of the insurgents who are attacking the convoys, who are taking the oil that is being produced there, and are, in fact, using our own money to fight our own efforts there. So it is our obligation, Mr. MEEK, as you have said, not only to investigate, not only to hold hearings into the strategy and the conduct of our military operations but also to ask some questions about how all of our taxpayer dollars are being spent there, because I think we are going to find some very interesting things as we go forward in the next few weeks.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. MURPHY, I would tell you right now, and Members, I think it is important that we

look at this for what it is worth. If I was thinking of the Iraq issue solely as a political issue, it would be let us go to the floor, Mr. MURPHY, and as we talk, we meet in the 30-something Working Group, let us not talk about the politics of the Iraq issue. If this was about maintaining the majority as it relates to politics, Mr. Speaker and Members, if this was about capturing the White House, Mr. Speaker, we wouldn't come to the floor to talk about how we can work in a bipartisan way or come to the floor and promote leadership. And I think it is important that we promote leadership and move in this new direction and saying that we have to deal with the big issue of Iraq.

I get members of local government and State government saying, Congressman, I need more money in my city. You cut the COPS program. Your Federal commitment as it relates to dollars for health care, for security, for the environment, they are not there like they used to be there. And we put parameters on ourselves because we told the American people what we would do, pay-as-we-go philosophy or principles that we already passed, and we have this war going on and we have young men and young women. You have a lot of Reservists that are there that are 40, 50 years old, that are away from their families 15 months at a pop.

We come to Washington, D.C., most of us, our families are back in the district and we are here and we are missing for about 4 or 5 days, but we get to go back home at the end of the week, unlike those men and women when they board that chartered flight. When they go over to Kuwait or fly straight into Baghdad Airport or end up in Turkey at one of our staging bases there, or end up somewhere else as they feed into Iraq, they don't get the opportunity to say, Hey, kids, I am going to be back in a couple of weeks. So I think it is important that we look at this issue and treat it with the serious attention that it needs.

So for the President to come here last night and say, give me an opportunity, give me an opportunity for my plan to work, well, let me tell you something. It is almost like looking in the refrigerator and seeing a carton of milk there and you take it out and open the carton and you say, wow, that milk is sour; let me put it back in, maybe it will be fresh tomorrow. That logic doesn't work. So it is important.

And I am glad to see some of our Republican colleagues and many of our Democratic colleagues that are questioning the President, before he can even leave the Chamber, about the speech, what he did not say in the speech, that did November 7 happen? Did you hear it?

At the press conference after the November election, he said, you know, I guess it did have something to do with Iraq. And some of the tough talk ended. And I just want to say if I can commend the President, he didn't come

with the chest-beating that he usually does, but he did go back to scaring the American people.

So I think it is important. There are issues we have to deal with. But I am on record, Mr. Speaker and Members, on the issue of being a leader, having the courage, and representing the people that have sent us to Washington, DC to be able to govern in this government. Give our men and women what they need in Iraq, but at the same time push forth diplomatic talks. At the same time make sure that we start not only discussion but redeployment of our troops more sooner than later, because that message would not only get to the Iraqi Government but also to the world community because we all play a role in this.

I see my good friend from Florida. We have served together, and she is the chairwoman on the Rail Subcommittee under the Transportation Committee. I am so glad she has joined us. Mr. MURPHY has had so much to say on this topic, and I am so glad you are here on the floor.

I yield to Ms. BROWN from Florida.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Thank you so much for your leadership, Congressman from Miami, my good friend.

Let me just say I just finished with Gator Radio, and they asked me the question, What is the role of Congress, what can we do about stopping the President from expanding the war? And I was just on the radio talking to the community and I have gotten some call back, what can we do as a Congress?

I tell people all the time I did not vote for the war, but I support the troops. And you have got your head in the lion's mouth. How do you get it out? And the question is what can we do as a Congress to stop the expansion? Because I think the speech that the President gave about expanding it to 20,000 troops, that is not what he was saying. I think he was saying that he doesn't need to come to this Congress to decide that he is going into Iran or that he is going into other places, and so there is clearly an expansion of the war. And what is our role as Members of Congress when the President of the United States does not respect the Congress and does not feel that we are equal branches and that he does not have to come to us to get permission to expand this war? The students want to know. I want to know what to tell them.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Reclaiming my time, the bottom line is, Ms. BROWN, that we have the responsibility to govern here. The President is the executive. He is the Commander in Chief. He was given the authority by the Congress, even though there were many votes that weren't in the affirmative of giving him that authority. He can send additional troops.

There has been a discussion in the Senate. I haven't quite read the briefing information on it or the report from the Senate session today. I know

there will be sessions in the House dealing with that. I talked earlier in this Special Order about Mr. MURTHA and what he is doing in his committee as it relates to defense oversight. We know that there will be a bill, a supplemental, I think a \$99 billion bill coming to the floor, which will be, from what I understand, the last supplemental bill.

When we say "supplemental," I want to make sure all the Members and everyone understands this is basically what we call emergency funding for the war. It is not necessarily in the budget. If it was in the budget, it would go through a process just like you do with your transportation dollars in your committee, giving authorization for certain spending. This is just pretty much a wish list from the administration that is given to the Appropriations Committee, and it really doesn't go through the full process. I understand this is the last supplemental that will come through for Iraq and Afghanistan. But what is also in his supplemental are ballistic missiles, other issues that they are spending money on.

So we have the power of the purse strings. But I can tell you, which I know that we are all together on and you mentioned, we will not cut money off to the troops that are on the ground there. But we said, leading up to the end of the 109th Congress, that we will not defund the troops that are in harm's way. But no one said anything about escalating the number of troops, adding more onto it.

So a lot of folks are upset. It is not just Democrats that are upset. The American people are. And the President is going against a 70-plus percent approval and heading in a new direction on this issue of Iraq, and he is still heading in the same direction that he was heading in prior to the November election. So it is up to us, Congresswoman BROWN, to not only state within the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD but encourage our colleagues not only on our side of the aisle but on the Republican side of the aisle that we have to lead in the way that the American people want us to lead.

I am encouraged by something, seeing some of the comments by some of the Republicans about what the President said.

□ 1630

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. You know, we had a closed-door briefing yesterday, and the important point that I made is that every Member, all 435 Members of this House of Representatives have the responsibility for the security of this country. And I think we have more of a responsibility than just to give this President a blank check. And I think we owe it to this country to make sure we get more of some kind of response other than we are just expanding, and not really deal with us in a very constructive way.

The second point, and I have just got two quick points, and I have a plane to

catch. On the area of health care, the President talked about health care, and I am one Member that would vote for it. I believe we should have universal health care. But you have to, always dealing with this administration, it is always in the details. Now he is talking about taking money from public hospitals. And when we say public hospitals, you have got one, I have got Shands, but you have got Jackson Memorial. Taking money from public hospitals, that is unacceptable. That is the only safety net that we have. And so that is one proposal that shouldn't arrive here, but when it does, it should be dead on arrival.

And the last point, I was disappointed, and I guess everybody in the gulf region was disappointed, there was no discussion about the gulf region, none whatsoever. Nothing about Katrina. Now, the American people, they saw something with Katrina that they didn't like. Not only did they see a government that was inept, uncaring, but incompetent, and yet nothing.

I talked to an 82-year-old lady on Thursday who 3 months before Katrina, she paid off her house. Paid off her house 3 months before Katrina. To this day she is homeless and hasn't received a penny from all of the dollars that we have appropriated. Now, we have a responsibility to this lady just like we do, we are insisting, that we put almost \$500 billion in Iraq and said that, oh, they don't have to pay it back. But every dime that we put into New Orleans, we are going to say they have got to pay it back. I am sure it doesn't have anything to do that they are people of color.

But I have got to say we have got our challenges. I want to thank all of you 30-something-plus for your leadership on the floor and keeping these issues before the American people.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Ms. BROWN, when you said 30-something-plus, you looked at me.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. And then she looked at me.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Well, obviously we have a couple of Gators here on the floor, and like I said, I just talked to the Gator network. And so it has nothing to do with age, it has to do with maturity on the issues. And I want to thank you all for bringing these issues before the American people.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Ms. BROWN, before you leave, I just wanted to say before yielding to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ that I am glad that you came to the floor, because you have been given voice in this.

And I remember being a non-Member of Congress. You served with my mom; and I was in the senate, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and I were serving in the Florida Senate. I remember you going out to the mike by the Cannon Building where C-SPAN had a camera rolling, and it was a press conference, and you went out along with a number of Members saying that it is

wrong that we gave the President the authority to go to war; and that you have been a voice on this issue because you knew that this could possibly happen, the position that we are in now.

I also want to add, since you said he didn't mention anything about Katrina, he didn't say anything about veterans. And I know you have been up front and on target on veteran benefits. We have many from Florida; I know Mr. MURPHY has them from Connecticut. And I think that it is important that even though, Mr. Speaker, veterans were not mentioned, victims of Katrina weren't mentioned, we picked up on it. And we are going to make sure that we continue to do the things that we need to do.

Thank you, Ms. BROWN.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Thank you. And as far as veterans are concerned, I am the second person on the committee, and I have been here for over 14 years, and I have been on that committee because I think it is so important that people that give their most, that we have got to make sure that we pay them back. And I am concerned that in the past under this administration, that is where we have cut. We have cut veterans programs, and they are coming back, and they need everything. I have gone out to Bethesda, and I am planning that we all go out there to Bethesda, and every veteran in every room needed casework and assistance.

So, basically we are not doing our duty, not taking care of those men and women when they come back wounded after giving their all for this country. We have got a responsibility in the Constitution, coequal branches. This is the people's House, and we should speak up and make sure that we fund programs that will benefit those veterans. Thank you again for your leadership.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you so much to our colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida, Congresswoman BROWN. And I am so pleased to join my 30-Something colleagues here this afternoon, our newest 30-Something colleague from Connecticut CHRIS MURPHY. With our new-found responsibility, I have been a little tied up the last couple times we have had this Special Order hour, so I am really pleased to be able to be with you. And we have some fresh blood and some new dynamics that we will engage in. It will be really fun to work with you and banter a little bit.

But I will tell you that this being the day after the President's State of the Union Address, Mr. MURPHY, I was particularly disturbed listening to the President. The privilege that we have here in this House, and it was yours for the first time last night, and I remember 2 years ago, I am just 2 years ahead of you in this process, and I remember the feeling that I had sitting in this Chamber and the awesome responsibility that I felt on my shoulders being this far from the President and having

the chance to listen to him deliver that address, and the expectation that I had as a representative of my constituents, that the expectation that he would say something more than words.

And last year, if you recall, you were in your State legislature when he delivered last year's State of the Union. He talked about the need to end America's addiction to foreign oil, and subsequently that turned out to just be words because he ended up proposing in his budget, and they actually enacted, a cut in the energy legislation, that this Republican leadership that is no longer in charge here, they actually cut the funding to alternative energy, exploring alternative energy resources.

Now, last night he says the same thing in a different way. And we are just to the point, why should we expect that there is meaning and action coming down the pipe behind the words?

On the war in Iraq, I know I have heard from my constituents, and it is just shocking that after the response from the voters on November 7, that this President would not get the message that the American people were sending him. They want a new direction. They want to move the troops from a combat focus to a training focus, get the Iraqi troops to stand up on their own so that that country can take care of itself. So it is just shocking the lack of understanding of his priorities and where he is on the issues that are most important to people.

On health care, the health care priorities. There are 47 million people in this country, 3½ million in Florida, that don't have health insurance. And his solution to that problem is a tax deduction, a tiny tax deduction that he thinks will spur people who benefit from it to take that money and buy health insurance. That just shows a callous indifference. And you are an expert in health care; that was your focus. That shows a callous indifference to what the problems that the uninsured and underinsured are really facing.

You are probably familiar with the death spiral created by insurance companies where they cordoned off the people who are the most sick. Some States have adopted guaranteed-issue policies and modified community rating like we did in Florida so that there were only a few things that were taken into consideration when rates were set. But for the most part that is not what people are able to get when buying health insurance. So the sickest of the sick get cordoned off into a group; that group is priced out of the market, and then they don't have the ability to afford that health insurance.

A simple tax deduction is not going to make health insurance accessible and affordable for that group of people. It is just unbelievable, Mr. MURPHY. And I fail to understand why this President only seems to keep his own counsel. It is just really unbelievable.

So I will yield to you or to Mr. MEEK, but that was my feeling and my reac-

tion in listening last night. And when I talked to our radio stations in south Florida this morning, I know the feedback that our radio hosts were getting was similar.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Thank you for yielding, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I think that was the feeling that a lot of us here for our first State of the Union felt as well. I was able to sit with a lot of the first-term Members to listen to the speech, and we all left shaking our heads, because when we went out and campaigned to come to this body, and when we go back to our districts to talk to people, I mean, it is very clear that they don't want patchwork solutions when it comes to health care; they don't want a little tinkering around the edges when it comes to energy reform. They want bold leadership from Washington.

It is no small thing for a bunch of people across this country to go out and cast out long-term incumbents, which is what happened in a lot of these districts. It takes a lot of courage in order to make that decision for change. And, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, I think you are exactly right that they are looking to us to have that same type of courage. They are requiring us to take that same type of bold action that they took by turning over this body into new hands, into new leadership. And the President's suggestions last night when it came to health care and when it came to energy policy simply don't measure up.

Let's think about it; 6.8 million people in this country have lost their health care insurance in the last 6 years. Premiums during that time have risen 81 percent in the last 6 years while wages stayed flat. Now, if the President, as you said, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, listened to counsel besides his own, he would know that a tax deduction doesn't help the people that don't have insurance because about 50 percent of the uninsured aren't paying income taxes right now. So the people that we need to help, the people that right now are clogging up our emergency rooms, and, as you know, this is not just a matter of doing the right thing for the uninsured, this is doing the right thing for all of us who are subsidizing the people who walk into the emergency rooms, get this extravagantly expensive care simply because they didn't have the insurance to get them in to have preventative care. The proposal he unveiled yesterday really, I think, does grave injustice to those people out there who were struggling with a system that is fundamentally broken, and it simply isn't going to be fixed around the edges.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Will the gentleman yield for 1 second on that point? Because on the health care issue specifically, the gentlewoman from Florida talked about being supportive of universal health care. And, I mean, I am supportive of expanding access to health care to everyone as well. But our good friends on the other side

of the aisle like to use that as a bogeyman for us and imply that that means socialized medicine, and that we want to implement this single-payer system that is going to be government top-down health care.

There are ways to expand access to health care to large populations, to almost everybody who is uninsured, and then we only have to work hard towards ensuring that last phase of the population. We can expand access to health care for all children by expanding the SCHIP program. We can expand access to health care to more older Americans by simply expanding the Medicare program and letting people from 50 to 64 years old buy into that program. Those are bills that were filed when we were in the minority and that will be filed again and that we will have an opportunity to be able to pursue now that we are past the 100-hour agenda. So just you having come just out of the State legislature and being a health care expert, I would just love to hear your thoughts about that.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, you are exactly right. I remember standing at a supermarket in my district during the campaign or maybe a few years before, and a woman who was, I think, 59, 58 years old, who had been laid off, and who understandably was having trouble finding new employment. It is difficult for older Americans to find a new job, especially one that has a comprehensive package of benefits. And she looked at me with this blank face and said, "Why am I in this position? Why can I not get health care when I know the Medicare program is right there? I am willing to pay for it. I am willing to contribute to it. And yet I can't get access to this program simply because I have been put into a situation where I can't find a job or I can't find a job with benefits, and I don't qualify for the program."

So there are ways that we can help, as you said, those older Americans who are on the cusp of being able to qualify for Medicare, and certainly the millions of children around this country who have no health care insurance and end up getting sick. I mean, they get sick, and they come into our emergency rooms to get the care they need. Mr. RYAN said here the other night, we do have a system of universal coverage in this country; unfortunately, it is in our emergency rooms rather than in our doctors' offices and our primary care doctors' offices.

And maybe just to tie this back to what we were talking about before when it comes to the war in Iraq. You know, we have an obligation to our veterans when they come back, and what we have done here over the past 10 years to the health care system for veterans is a travesty of justice to the brave men and women who have fought for this country.

I absolutely support moving towards universal coverage. I think you are right, it doesn't have to be done all at

once. In fact, I think the best proposals before this body are to really take some commonsense approaches to it. But maybe the first thing we should do is start to repair some of the damage that we did to the veterans health care system to make sure that when you volunteer to serve this country abroad, that when you come back, you are going to get the mental health care that you need, that you are going to not have to wait in line for a surgery that you badly need. Maybe that is our first obligation is to take care of those folks, because in the end we are here to serve everyone, but we are certainly here to make sure that those people that fight for us, Mr. MEEK, are taken care of. And I would yield to you.

□ 1645

Mr. MEEK of Florida. All I am going to do is do a close. I know we have the Web site and all, but I want to yield to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ because I want to tell you, I am not from Connecticut, but if I was one of your constituents, I would vote for you. You are good. That is all I can say.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. We had another member of the Florida delegation. I am honored to be part of the 30-something group, but to be part of the Florida delegation here today was just as impressive.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I was just saying if I was your constituent I would vote for you. It is good to have a Member of Congress that is as well informed into the issues that are facing the constituents and the American people. I yield to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ because we are going to be closing out soon.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you so much. One of the things that I think is important for the Members and other folks to know is we did this 30-something hour night after night in the minority for the last several years, and we want folks to know that we are not just shutting down and becoming complacent and resting on our laurels now that we are in the majority because there continues to be a need for accountability, as the State of the Union address demonstrated last night.

We are going to assert Congress's oversight role, reestablish the system of checks and balances that was totally absent the last number of years. We are going to use the 30-something Working Group forum to be able to do that and also talk about what Democrats are going to do, implement our agenda, talk about the priorities of the American people.

I am so thrilled that we have expanded our ranks and that we have an opportunity to interact and dialogue with you. I can tell you that on election night on November 7, I was cheering very loud that you were coming to join us in the 110th.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to yield to Mr. MURPHY and he is going to give the Web site out and we will be ready to shut down.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Thank you very much. As I said before, coming back from the campaign trail I got to watch the three of you down here, and I think stole a lot of your material. So I am glad to maybe provide a little bit of material for the next crop of 30-somethings.

May I do Mr. RYAN's job today?

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Please.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. And give out the Web site for the 30-something Working Group: www.speaker.gov/30something. If you go there, you will get all the good information that we talked about today and participate online in the discussion that we have been having here.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Well, it is an honor to be on the floor with Mr. MURPHY and also Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Being in the majority brings about responsibility for all of us. So we have a lot to do. And Mr. Speaker, we want to thank the Democratic leadership, from the Speaker to the leader to the whip to the chair and the vice chair for allowing us to have this Special Order on the Democratic side. It was an honor addressing the House once again.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one if its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1. An act to provide greater transparency in the legislative process.

ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I thought that there was only one speech given in the last century that would become very famous in the few years just ahead of us, and that was the speech given on the 8th day of March in San Antonio, Texas, by M. King Hubbert in 1956, but I just discovered a few days ago a speech which I think may become just about as famous.

This was a speech that was given by the father of the nuclear submarine, Hyman Rickover, and he gave this speech in May 1957. So soon we will reach the 50th anniversary of this very famous speech by the father of the nuclear submarine.

I just wanted to start by reading a couple of things from this speech that he gave. He gave the speech, by the way, to a group of physicians at a banquet of the Annual Scientific Assembly of the Minnesota State Medical Association in St. Paul, Minnesota, May 14, 1957.

The title of the speech had nothing to do with medicine. The title of the